26th November 1952]

[*Note.*—An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.]

III.—MOTIONS FOR THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

(1) EVICTION OF LANDLESS POOR IN MUSAVELI VILLAGE IN TANJORE DISTRICT.

MR. SPEAKER:—"I have received notice of a number of adjournment motions to discuss matters of urgent public importance. Dr. K. B. Menon has given notice of one and it reads as follows:—

'This House do adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the mass arrests and satyagraha in the Musaveli village of Tanjore district consequent on the large-scale evictions of landless poor from their lands by the Government for allotting them to ex-service men.'

I remember that when he gave this to me, he himself said that this question had been hanging fire for the last one year, but I wish to know from the hon. Member before I give a ruling what he has to say with regard to this motion."

* DR. K. B. MENON:—"Mr. Speaker, Sir, permit me to present this case."

MR. SPEAKER:—"But let him not make a long speech. The hon. Member himself told me that it has been pending for the last one year."

DR. K. B. MENON:—"Not for one year, Sir. I was wrong in giving that figure if I did."

MR. SPEAKER:—"Then the hon. Member is correcting that now."

DR. K. B. MENON:—"I shall in the course of my statement . . ."

MR. SPEAKER:—"But let it not be a long statement; a short statement will do."

* DR. K. B. MENON:—"I shall be very brief in presenting my case, Sir. Musaveli village is in Tanjore district. In 1944, about 1,300 acres of uncultivated waste lands were distributed among 300 families under the Sivoijama Scheme. These lands were taken up by poor peasants. Among them vere many Harijans and each family received from one to five acres of land. These people thought that the lands would be theirs and they invested all their accumulated earnings and constructed irrigation channels at their own expense and effected other improvements in order to make the lands cultivable. In 1950–51 a survey of the village was conducted and the plots were marked out and numbers were allotted and the peasants were paying their kist. One bright morning in June 1952, the villagers heard the village announcer beating the tom-tom, announce that the Government

had decided to take their lands away and give the same to co-operatives to be distributed to ex-service men. It was only then that they realised that the Government had changed their mind."

MR. SPEAKER:—"On what date was it?"

* DR. K. B. MENON:—"In June 1952; I think it was on the 27th June because I am not quite sure of the date. It was only then that the villagers realized that the Government had changed their mind and the lands would no longer be with them but will be taken away from them in order to be given away to ex-service men. This came as a terrible shock to the villagers and they ran helter-skelter to the Collector and everyone in order to prevent their land being taken away from them but nothing was done and the only thing they could do was to resort to *satyagraha*. I ask, Sir, was it necessary for the Government to have resorted to eviction of these people in order to provide for ex-service men? Nobody contends that ex-service men should not be provided with lands, but we do contend that it was not necessary for the Government to take away the lands from the peasants to provide for ex-service men. There is plenty of land available in the same village and also in the neighbouring taluk. There are thousands of acres of cultivable land that can be conveniently given to ex-service men and the Government could have provided ex-service men with such lands and avoided taking the lands from the poor peasants. In the second place, there was no urgency in the matter because even these ex-service men to whom the lands had been given, have not taken advantage of it, because up to date, only 22 of them have shown themselves on the scene and have taken possession of the land. They seem to be very reluctant to beat their swords and guns into ploughshares, and they do not really seem to want to do it. Why then are the Government so anxious to deprive the poor peasants of their lands and hand them over to the ex-service men who will not take them? I feel, Sir, that this is against all canons of justice and fairness. I think that it is against the voluntary assurance that the then Chief Minister himself gave, that the lands given under the Sivoijama Scheme would not be taken from those who had taken possession of them and it is also against the priority fixed by the Government in the distribution of land. The first to be served according to Government are the poor landless people including Harijans, and next preference is to be given to political sufferers and the ex-service men come last. With regard to Tanjore the Government promulgated an Ordinance and then came forward with a Bill to prevent evictions. I do not know why the Government themselves are committing acts which would make them guilty of the same offence against which they are providing safeguards by means of the Bill. What I say to Government is, 'Physician, heal thyself'."

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—"I did not hear the date properly. May I know what it is, Sir?"

DR. K. B. MENON:—"27th June 1952."

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* THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Whatever may be your ruling, Sir, if the hon. Member has a grievance about the matter, I would request him to send it up to Government. They will look into the matter and there is no need to make a motion for adjournment."

MR. SPEAKER :—" I have heard the hon. Member. I really sympathize with those poor people who have been evicted from their lands. I am not going to enter into the merits of the matter. As far as the Chair is concerned, the question is whether it can be admitted as an adjournment motion or not. I really sympathize with those who have been evicted, but I know that our sympathetic Chief Minister will look into it and do justice to them. Let me point out to the hon. Member that he himself told me that the evictions took place in June last, and so the question has been there for the last six months. So, it is not an urgent matter and I rule it out of order."

(2) ELECTIONS TO MINOR PANCHAYATS BY SHOW OF HANDS.

MR. SPEAKER :—" Two hon. Members have given notice of 11-40 a.m.
adjournment motions, more or less on the same lines. Let me first take the adjournment motion of Sri Sankarayya. The motion reads as follows :—

' This House stands adjourned to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, viz., the impending elections to the minor panchayat boards in the State of Madras by show of hands instead of by secret ballot which is the recognized democratic method.'

Let me hear what the hon. Member has to say on this motion."

*SRI B. SANKARAYYA :—" ఇప్పటికే యీ మైనరు పంచాయతీ ఎన్నికలు ప్రారంభించినట్లు తెలుస్తున్నది. ఈ విధంగా యీ ఎన్నికలు ప్రారంభించినట్లయితే అప్పుడు రాష్ట్రములో అనేక గ్రామాలలో చాలా అరాచక పరిస్థితులు ఏర్పడేటటువంటి ప్రమాదాలు ఉన్నవి. అందువలన యిప్పుడు ఈ అసెంబ్లీలో ఈ రోజు కార్యక్రమము ఆపుదలచేయించి, యీ ఎన్నికల విషయం ముఖ్యంగా చర్చించుట అవసరమైయున్నది. ఇప్పుడు ప్రభుత్వమువారు జరుపుతున్న పంచాయతి ఎన్నికలు ప్రాథమికమైనటువంటి ప్రజాస్వామ్యానికి విరుద్ధముగా నడుపబడుచున్నవి. ఈ విధంగా ఎన్నికలు పెట్టడమనేది మన రాష్ట్రములో పెద్ద ప్రమాదమైనటువంటి అశాంతిని అల్లకల్లోలములను రెచ్చగొట్టటానికి దారి తీస్తున్నది. ఇప్పటికే ప్రతి గ్రామములోనూ, ప్రజలలో కక్షలు, పెద్ద పెద్ద కొట్లాటలు పార్టీలు బయలుదేరినవి. ఇప్పుడు యీ ఎన్నికలు జరిపే పద్ధతినిబట్టి గ్రామాలలో కొట్లాటలకు అవకాశము యిస్తున్నవి. యీ ఎన్నికలకు బహిరంగంగా చేతులు ఎత్తే పద్ధతి సౌమ్యమైన పద్ధతి కాదు. రహస్య ఓటింగు ఉంటేనే ప్రజాశాంతికి రక్షణ యివ్వగలదు. బహిరంగముగా చేతులు ఎత్తే ఓటింగు పద్ధతి తక్షణము మానివేయించవలసియున్నది. అందువలన యీ ఎన్నికల పద్ధతి సక్రమమైన పద్ధతి అగునో కాదో సభ్యులందరును, ప్రభుత్వమువారును గుర్తించవలసియున్నది. అందుకనే నేను యీ అవసరమైన adjournment motion ను తెచ్చియున్నాను. గనుక యీ దినము నా తీర్మానము అత్యావసరమైన తీర్మానము గనుక సభా కార్యక్రమము ఆపుదలచేయించి యీ తీర్మానము చర్చించవలసియున్నది.